

NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

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October 4, 1953.

"WATERCOLORS AND DRAWINGS BY GAVARNI"  
EXHIBITION TO OPEN OCTOBER 4  
AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

WASHINGTON, October 3: David E. Finley, Director of the National Gallery of Art, announced today that a special exhibition of fifty "Watercolors and Drawings by Gavarni" will open at the Gallery on Sunday afternoon, October 4, at 2 o'clock, and will continue through November 1.

The exhibition discloses less familiar achievements of this terse and humorous French Nineteenth Century artist, who is better known in this country for his lithographs. It is being circulated by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service.

The watercolors and drawings shown here represent mainly two phases of Gavarni's artistic development. The first begins with his extended sojourns in England in 1847 and 1849. "Peasant Girl Smoking," "English Beggar," and "The Barmaid" belong to this period, which is characterized by a complicated watercolor technique employing brilliant highlights.



The second phase begins in 1851, after his return to France, and lasts until his death in 1866. "Reverie," "Two Actors," "Chocolate Vendor," and "Head of a Woman" were done in this period, as was the charming series, "The Twelve Months," seven of which are included in the exhibition. Instead of watercolor, works in these years are done in pencil, heightened with colored inks in unusual shades of red, green and brown, and accented with touches of gouache.

As Marvin C. Ross, Chief Curator of Art, Los Angeles County Museum, points out in his foreword to the exhibition catalogue: "Gavarni's natural elegance and taste, his verve and distinction brought him quickly to the fore. He was more interested in portraying the foibles of different classes of Parisian society than in political satire." He continues, "The subjects were described by captions of such penetration and powerful irony or compassionate understanding of human nature that he came to be accepted as one of the great French moralists."

The greater part of the watercolors and drawings included in the exhibition are lent by the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore, from its large Gavarni collection. It was assembled by William T. Walters, whom Edmond de Goncourt describes as "passioné de Gavarni," and his



friend, George A. Lucas. Mr. Walters bought his first works by the artist during a visit to his studio in 1862, and the last ones at the Hetzel Sale in 1884. The collection thus formed was shown once in its entirety at the Walters Art Gallery in March, 1949. The splendid drawings lent by the Rosenwald Collection, National Gallery of Art, were also included at that time.

Supplementing the present exhibition in the National Gallery of Art is a group of 53 French Nineteenth Century prints from the Rosenwald Collection. In this group the following artists, among others, are represented: Delacroix, Géricault, Chassériau, Barye, Isabey and Bonington.

† END



National Gallery of Art

"WATERCOLORS AND DRAWINGS BY GAVARNI"

Smithsonian Institution  
Traveling Exhibition Service  
Washington 25, D. C.

Itinerary

1953 October 4 - November 1	National Gallery of Art Washington, D. C.
November 8 - December 15	J. B. Speed Art Museum Louisville, Kentucky
1954 January 1 - 24	Museum of Art University of Michigan Ann Arbor, Michigan
February 7 - 28	The Toledo Museum of Art Toledo, Ohio
March 14 - April 4	The Philadelphia Art Alliance Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
April 18 - May 9	Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center Colorado Springs, Colorado
May 23 - June 16	California Palace of the Legion of Honor San Francisco, California
July 1 - 31	Los Angeles County Museum Los Angeles, California
August 15 - September 15	William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art Kansas City, Missouri
October 1 - 22	
November 5 - 26	Akron Art Institute Akron, Ohio